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ABSTRACT

The relatively new field of thanatology provides a rich supply of resources for teachers to use in developing an understanding of death and in preparing to deal with the subject with children. This review of the literature was completed with the primary purpose of providing teachers with a summary of effective teaching methods and resources to use with children at different developmental levels. Other objectives of this paper are to encourage educators to discuss this topic openly and to help them to communicate with children about death in a more therapeutic manner. Tables relate characteristics of children's death concept to Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development and offer presentation, action, and interaction techniques for death education for children. Forty-one references are listed. (JD)

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HOW TO DEAL WITH THE SUBJECT OF DEATH WITH STUDENTS IN GRADES K-12

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INTRODUCTION

The literature abounds with documentation of need for death education for children of all ages (1-4), but as many accounts can be found of teachers' insecurities in dealing the subject of death with students in grades K-12 (5-8). Preservice and inservice programs have rarely dealt with death and dying, and as a result of this lack of formal teacher preparation, children's death concerns are generally not being handled in our schools (9). To the extent that we repress the subject of death in the schools, we also suppress an understanding of life. As Gibran wrote in The Prophet, "For life and death are one, even as the river and sea are one" (10, p. 80). We need to go back to the late 1500's and take a lesson from Montaigne's essay "Of the Education of Children", where he wrote: "He who would teach men to die would teach them to live" (11). Leviton (12) gives us a more recent summary of the value of including death education in the K-12 curriculum:

> Perhaps the greatest benefit of teaching taboo subject matter is that the taboo is automatically removed. By discussing death, its implied sacred and unclean character--along with the accompanying myths, stereotypes and invalid generalizations--are held open to examination and scrutiny. If taught properly, death education is very much concerned with life in the fullest sense of the word. It should enhance man's reverence for and joy of life by reducing his fear of death. (p. 40)

In a publication of the National Education Association, Ulin (1) takes a strong stand for the inclusion of death education within the public school curriculum. He writes that since parents and even church groups fail to communicate effectively with children

concerning issues of death and dying, the schools must assume the responsibility for helping children learn about this sensitive issue.

How, then, can teachers approach the subject of death and attempt to understand how to deal with it with K-12 students? The relatively new field of thanatology provides a rich supply of resources for teachers to use in developing an understanding of death and in preparing to deal with the subject with children. This review of the literature was completed with the primary purpose of providing teachers with a summary of effective teaching methods and resources to use with children at different developmental levels. An annotated bibliography of books, films, and filmstrips for children on the subjects of death and loss, with suggestions for use according to age level and concept being taught, accompanies this paper. Other objectives of this paper are to encourage educators to discuss this topic openly and to help them learn to communicate with children about death in a more therapeutic manner.

PREPARATION AND QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS OF DEATH EDUCATION

Teachers may obtain preparation for teaching death education to children in a wide variety of programs. Most universities now offer death education courses that could be beneficial to teachers of K-12 students. Workshops are available from a variety of organizations, and the excellent sources listed in the annotated bibliography that accompanies this paper will provide the theoretical data needed for developing staff-in-service programs. Maurer and Muro (13) write that "a program of teacher-in-service and opportunity for parent education would be integral to the success of any comprehensive approach to death education in the lives of children" (p. 20).

In the new field of thanatology there are no recognized criteria for the education of thanatologists (14). The "experts" who now teach death education courses have had to provide their own training by means of self-study programs and whatever instruction and resources that were available. Professional thanatology societies such as the Association for Death Education and Counseling and the Foundation of Thanatology have recently joined together with interested scholars in a program to promote valid death education. The Association for Death Education and Counseling has developed a certification process for both educators and counselors in an effort to identify and improve competency among those who teach and counsel in the field of thanatology (15). Therefore, in the future there should be a vast improvement in the

vast improvement in the quality of death related information and services offered to developing training programs in death education.

This review of the literature revealed numerous recommendations and qualifications for teachers who are engaging in death education with children. Reeves and Knowles (16) recommend that prior to teaching death education the teacher should have an awareness and understanding of these four areas:

1. Own feelings and attitudes about death,
2. How children develop an understanding of death,
3. General stages and physiological and psychological symptoms of dying and grieving, and
4. General and specific helping behaviors (p. 6).

Rosenthal (9) recommends that teachers of death education need:

1. To be aware of their own attitudes, beliefs, and feelings about death.
2. Factual knowledge on such diverse areas as suicide, euthanasia, funeral parlors, terminal illness, and various facts and theories associated with death and grief.
3. Basic skills in listening and communicating about death (pp. 14-15).

Atkinson (7) lists two areas of need for teachers of death education. These are:

1. Information about children's needs, their developing concepts, possible grief reactions, and signs of interest or distress related to death.
2. To become aware of their personal taboos and fears by acknowledging and clarifying their attitudes, feelings, values, and beliefs about death (p. 152).

Corr (14) recommends four responsibilities for teachers prior to engaging in death education with children. They are:

1. Initiating reflection on one's own thoughts and feelings about death and study of relevant content in the field of death, dying, and bereavement.

2. Learn how to respond to real needs in children by improving own awareness of developmental and environmental factors that relate to childhood and death and by listening in an active way to the concerns of each particular child.
3. Learn to communicate effectively with children on the subject of death.
4. Cooperate with parents, teachers, counselors, the clergy, care givers, and all of the other relevant adults and institutions in our society in providing an ongoing process of death education (pp. 53-59).

Leviton (17) modified the five general criteria identified by Johnson (18) that apply to the qualities of a sex educator to present five criteria for teaching death education. They are:

1. The teacher must have initiated the process of understanding his or her own death feelings, and to have admitted not only its (death's) existence, but to its full status in the dynamics of his total personality.
2. The teacher needs to know about death and death education in order to teach it.
3. The teacher of death education needs to be able to use the language of death easily and naturally, especially in the presence of the young.
4. The teacher needs to be familiar with the sequence of developmental events throughout life, and to have a sympathetic understanding of common problems associated with them.
5. The teacher needs an acute awareness of the enormous social changes that are in progress and of their implications for changes in our patterns of death-related attitudes, practices, laws, and institutions.

When writing about death education for older children, Crase and Crase (19) added three other competencies of death educators to these five delineated by Leviton. They are:

6. The teacher of death education should be able to communicate with parents of adolescents in managing grief and bereavement and in handling other sensitive issues.
7. The effective teacher should be fairly sophisticated about counseling and crises intervention techniques. Teachers will encounter students who are seeking special assistance in coming to terms with death and dying.

8. Teachers of death education should possess evaluation skills in order to make assessments of students' progress in light of predetermined course objectives.

Before teachers can help children understand and interpret death-related experiences and help alleviate fears and provide comfort for children, they need to know something about children's development of death concepts and their thoughts and feelings about death. The next section of this paper, "Children's Concepts of Death", provides guidelines for teachers who want to be more helpful to children by understanding their typical thoughts, feelings, concerns, and fears about death. The section also will aid teachers in understanding children's common misconceptions about death and help them learn to communicate about death with children in a more therapeutic manner.

CHILDREN'S CONCEPTS OF DEATH

The child's development of an understanding of the meaning of death is influenced by his/her experiences and intellectual development. Since each child is unique in terms of these factors, it is not possible to predict the child's awareness and understanding of death with strict age related criteria. As in all areas of a child's cognitive development, children develop concepts of death in an orderly sequence. The rate of development of awareness and understanding of death may vary significantly among children, but research on the development of death concepts reveals that the sequence is the same for all children.

According to Knowles and Reeves (20), developmental traits appear to be based on two characteristics of children's thoughts: the capacity to create order out of disorder or use of magical or pre-logical explanations and egocentracism. Children create order out of disorder by placing their own personal meanings on information or developing their own explanations when a subject is not explain adequately. Wass (14) reported that her 1977 research indicated that children think people die "because they eat too much candy... lollipops" or "because the nurse gives them a pill" (p. 12). LeShan (21) gives an example of this when telling of a young brother who was "spared" the information about cremation and burial of a sibling. He developed fears of the dark and refused to open closet doors or dresser drawers. When the child eventually asked what had been done with the sibling's dead body and explanations were given, the

child was visibly relieved and revealed that he thought the body was somewhere in the house.

Egocentracism causes the young child to see events occurring for his or her personal benefit. This inability to differentiate between their own point of view and the view of others leads to at least three kinds of thinking unique to the child in Piaget's pre-operational phase of cognitive development. They are animistic thinking, magical thinking, and artificialism. Animistic thinking, or attributing life to inanimate objects, leads the child to believe the dead breathe, feel, and move. An example of this type of thinking is revealed by children's responses to the research question "What happens when people die?". Wass (14) reported that in Nagy's research, responses included: "It can't move because it's in the coffin"; "He lies there. Scratches the earth to come up. To get a little air" (p. 12). A child in Schilder and Wechsler's research responded, according to Wass (14), with the following answer: "They put him in a grave. He stays there until Saturday, then he may come out" (p. 12).

Magical thinking causes the young child to have difficulty distinguishing between wish or action and deed. Explanations about death with young children should emphasize that a child's thoughts or actions are not causally related to death. An example of this type of thinking was revealed when a young girl developed severe guilt over her father's death. When questioned she revealed that she had previously been told that she must eat her food in order to

live; and since she had not eaten her breakfast on the day her father died, she believed she was directly responsible for his death.

The third type of thinking related to egocentracism is artificialism. This is the belief that all objects and events in the world are manufactured or made. This type of thinking causes the child to think everything can be fixed or controlled. Wass (14) revealed an example of this type thinking from her 1977 research:

> Researcher: What happens when people die?
> Child: Sometimes they go to heaven, and sometimes they throw them in the ocean.
> Researcher: What happens then?
> Child: They drown.
> Researcher: And then?
> Child: They get a new body. I don't know any more than that.
>
> Researcher: What happens when people [illegible]?
> Child: They can't get up.
> Researcher: What do they do with somebody who can't get up?
> Child: They help them up. Lay them in the truck and take them home. Then they put them to bed.
> Researcher: And what happens after that?
> Child: They wake up in the morning and then he's all better (p. 12-13).

Children in the preoperational phase of cognitive development need to have honest, clear explanations of death that are related to real-life experiences whenever possible. Questioning the child regarding what causes death and what happens after death will help the adult to understand common misconceptions and clear up these distortions. Table I depicts children's conceptualizations about

death in the framework of Piagetian theory of cognitive development by summarizing children's gradual development of death concepts in relation to their overall cognitive development.

TABLE I

A Comparison of the Characteristics of Children's Death Concept with Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development

Age	Piaget's Periods, Phases and Cognition Characteristics	Characteristics of Death Concepts Development
0 1 2	I. Period of Sensorimotor Intelligence (0-2 yrs) Cognition limited to that experienced through sensory & motor activity. Limited language skills or conception of reality.	Death may be equated with separation and/or deprivation.
3 4 5 6	II. Period of Preparation & Organization of Concrete Operations. 1.) Pre-operational phase (2-7 yrs) Egocentric orientation. View world as animistic, magical & artificialistic. Reality is subjective.	Death is reversible. Thinking is magical, animistic & artificialistic r/t the dead. Death anxiety is brief but recurrent. Fears of abandonment & guilt r/t death. Concern about hunger, warmth of dead.
7 8 9	2.) Concrete Operational Phase (7-11/12 yrs) Less egocentric, more concrete, naturalistic thinking. Aware of conservation & reversibility.	Death if final & irreversible. Thinking is specific & concrete r/t the dead. Death fears increase. Think dead can see, hear, receive messages.
10 11 12+	III. Period of Formal Operations (12 - adult) Ability to deal with abstract concepts and with reality.	Death is final, irreversible, inevitable & universal. Thinking deals with abstract ideas r/t the dead and reality. Anxiety & denial about personal death. Understand death as a cessation of functioning.

Adults need to learn the importance of dealing with death in a positive manner, and in order to do this they must learn to use the language of death easily and comfortably before attempting to talk to children about death. Adults often fail to realize how much they modify language by common usage. The subject of death has been shrouded in euphenisms for so long that many adults have difficulty saying the word dead, but the words that may sound better for adults are worse for children. Jackson (22) reported the following incident:

> When a child was asked if she would like to go to the funeral home to see her grandmother's body for the last time, she responded, "No, I don't want to see Grandma with her head cut off" (p. 36). In her literal use of language, a "body" was that portion of the anatomy from the neck down.

Adults should not refer to death as "resting in peace", "sweet slumber", "sleeping", or an animal having to be "put to sleep", or the young child may become afraid of going to sleep at night. If words such as "gone", "passed away", and "went away" are used in reference to one who has died, brief separations may begin to worry the child, or everyday events such as leaving for trips may create worries. Using the term "lost" to refer to a person who has died may cause the young child to develop extreme fears about being lost. They may think that if you can lose one person then maybe you will lose them also. Some words of religious imagery have pitfalls also. Adults can conceive of heaven and angels in abstract terms, but the young child must conceive them in the only manner possible for him, concrete terms. To the child "heaven" is a place

that is located above the clouds and an angel is a person who has grown wings and "lives" in the sky flying around. If death is explained only in the abstract terminology of "gone to Heaven", children may fear that the dead person is flying around the sky watching over them and seeing the bad things they are doing. A young child who wondered what his grandfather was telling God about him, was probably dealing with the fear that his behavior was being constantly censored from above by his grandfather. Telling children that sickness was the cause of a death can also lead to anxiety in young children who are not able to differentiate between temporary and fatal illness. It is essential to explain to the child that only very serious illness causes death and that people who are sick rarely die from the illness, or he/she will worry about every minor illness that develops for himself or a loved one. Another way death is often explained is that a person died because he was old. This explanation can lead to mistrust when the child finds out that young people also die. This also may cause the child to worry constantly about elderly loved ones, or to ask every old person seen, "When are you going to die?". The list of euphenisms associated with the language of death is limitless; therefore it is not possible to allude to all possible misconceptions. The adult needs to become aware of the language used in reference to death and become comfortable using the correct, clear, concrete death language. Information about death will always be more real to the child if it is conveyed in relation to what the child may have seen or heard in

his experiences. Temporary and fatal illness might be explained to the child in the following manner: You remember going to see Grandfather in the hospital when he was so terribly sick. He had a very serious illness that the doctors could not help him get well from, so his illness got worse. Do you remember how he got to where he could not walk, and was so weak you could barely understand what he said to you? That is the serious kind of sickness that people sometimes get that they die from, but people get well from most kinds of illness. Do you remember going to the hospital to see Grandmother when she had her illness? She was very sick but it was not the kind of sickness that people usually die from. Remember how she got to feel better every day from the medicine she was taking? This is usually the kind of sickness that people have, but sometimes people do get serious illnesses like Grandfather had, and are not able to get well, so they must die.

The next section of this review covers goals for death education with students in grades K-12.

GOALS FOR DEATH EDUCATION WITH STUDENTS IN GRADES K-12

A review of goals of death education with children from the literature reveals Knott's (3) broad assertion that death education involves information sharing, values clarification, and coping behaviors. Gordon and Klass (23) list four general goals around which death education for children might be structured. They are:

1. To inform the students of facts not currently widespread in the culture;
2. To help the student effectively deal with the idea of personal death and the deaths of significant others;
3. To make the student an informed consumer of medical and funeral services;
4. To help the student formulate socioethical issues related to death and define value judgments these issues raise (p. 129).

Berg and Daugherty (24) list objectives involving the following broad areas:

1. Developing a realistic mental framework toward viewing death as a universal phenomenon;
2. Developing an appreciation for literature relative to death;
3. Acquiring knowledge that leads to an understanding of the biological, sociocultural, religious, psychological, and economic aspects of death and dying;
4. Developing an understanding of a variety of death-related viewpoints;
5. Development of usable cognitive skills.

Perkins (25) described a death education course for junior and senior high school students. Her objectives were related to the following areas:

1. To help students explore the theme of death in various types of literature;
2. To help students learn about the diversity of views and behaviors related to death and dying;
3. To allow students to relate their own concerns and experiences with death;

4. To help students learn about changing attitudes concerning death.

Leviton (26) gives us a list of thirteen objectives for death education. Those appropriate to death education with children broadly cover the following topics:

1. The need for removing the taboo aspect of death language in order to facilitate communication about death and dying;
2. The need to remove death-related anxieties through appropriate education;
3. Developing an understanding of and ability to react to a suicidal person;
4. Consumer education;
5. Developing an understanding of death and the dying process;
6. Recongizing variations in aspects of death both within and across cultures.

Hymovitz (27) discusses broad goals of death education in the schools as follows:

1. To teach that death and dying are part of life and living;
2. To help students to manage realistically the idea of their own death and the deaths of significant others;
3. To broaden the conceptualization and interpretation of the meaning of life's end in order to hallow life and live more fully.

Harnett (28) describes an independent study unit on death for advanced high school students where the main goals were:

1. To examine attitudes, perceptions, and language barriers in an attempt for the student to come to grips with his/her own feelings concerning death.
2. To examine various definitions of death and analyze the interaction and confusion that results from these definitions.
3. To identify the different stages of adjustment to the crisis of death and dying and apply these stages to real-life occurrences.

4. To analyze perceptions of death from the viewpoints of children, adolescents, young adults, the middle-aged, the elderly, and the terminally ill.
5. To develop an understanding of the dying person and learn to be supportive of and perceptive to his feelings and needs.
6. To evaluate the American grief process and formulate constructive plans for his or a relative's death.
7. To identify clues in an individual's behavior that suggest a possibility of suicide and devise a list of persons, groups, or agencies that deal with suicide (p. 527).

The best way to summarize this section of the review on goals for death education for students is to refer to Charles Corr's remarks from Wass & Corr's (14) book of guidelines and resources:

> Perhaps the most fundamental thing that children--and all the rest of us--need to do is to find a way to cope with whatever life presents.... The most basic task for a sound program of death education is to assist children to find effective ways of satisfying such needs--at least insofar as they relate to death. Whatever we have to offer by way of information, feelings, or values will all go for naught if it does not result in or cannot be related to constructive coping (p. 59).

In relation to this concept, Corr delineates goals for death education of children that he feels lead back into and improve the child's ongoing coping with living. They are:

1. Functional coping is fostered, initially, by allowing a child to release, share, or explore strong feelings about death.
2. Functional coping depends on the acquisition of reliable information and the gaining of relevant experiences.
3. Functional coping depends on the testing of our ideas and the exchange of viewpoints or interpretations with others.
4. Functional coping leads to the identification and the formation of values that can subsequently serve as principles to guide further decisions and actions (p. 60).

METHODOLOGY FOR USE WITH K-12 STUDENTS

Although no standardized curricula exist for use with children in teaching death education, several excellent curriculum guides are available that will make curriculum planning much easier for teachers. These sources are listed in the accompanying annotated bibliography entitled "An Annotated Bibliography for Teachers." A review of some of the more comprehensive guides reveals Gordon and Klass' (23) guide where suggested curricula, activities, teacher resources, and student resources are presented by grade level from nursery school through grade 12. Mills, Reisler, Robinson, and Vermilye (29) present a curriculum guide where learning opportunity, objectives, activities, and notes to the teacher are separated into four age levels, (1) 5-6 years, (b) 7-9 years, (c) 10-12 years, and (d) 13-18 years. Knott, Ribar, Duson, and King (30) structured learning experiences and grouped them into the following four major categories: (a) Introductory, Warm-ups, Ice-breakers, (b) Values Clarification , Affective Experiences, (c) Instrumental Exercise and Applied Designs, and (d) Role Plays. These experiences will be most helpful to the teacher planning death education for students in grades seven and above.

Stanford and Perry (31), and Adler, Stanford, and Adler (32) developed compendiums of lessons geared to grades 1-12 which include varied anthology of readings. An excellent recent source was developed by Wass and Corr (14) where anthology of readings and annotated bibliographies are combined. Berg and Daugherty (24)

developed a thematic teaching unit as a package approach to death education for high school students. The unit includes an anthology of readings, student activity book, teacher's resource book, and four audiovisuals. Corr (33) developed a model syllabus for a broad-scale, introductory course on death and dying that would be appropriate for students in grades seven and above. In addition, thanatology literature contains numerous descriptions of courses conducted with students in the classroom that may be applicable to individual teachers' needs (7, 34, 35, 36).

Death education appears to be more effective when didactic methodology is combined with experiential methodology. Oshman (37) reviewed published research on death education methodology and concluded:

> ...virtually all of the studies which have demonstrated effectiveness have employed programs which...have included elements of an experiential and more personally involving nature such as...group process discussions, or explicit focusing on personal feelings about death. Further, in all of the studies which report negative findings, these more personal or experiential elements were absent.... This suggests that it may be necessary to combine didactic formats with more experiential ones within programs of death education to effectively alter attitudes toward death or reduce death anxiety" (p. 11).

Many authors believe the "teachable moment" strategy is the best method to use in teaching death education to students in kindergarten through third grade. This strategy involves taking advantage of life's daily experiences with death and loss to teach a child that it is both normal and healthy to talk about death. Teachers need only be sensitive to these "teachable moments" and

keep in mind the organizing standard of our concern for helping children learn about death and dying. Teachable moments need not be only those opportunities that develop from an external event. Teachable moments can be created in the classroom with a little creativity and imagination. One method of creating "teachable moments" is the use of books about death as a kind of therapeutic or constructive intervention in the lives of children. Many writers commend the use of "bibliotherapy" as a teaching methodology in death education with all ages. Berstein (38) discusses bibliotherapy at length and advocates it as a tool for preventing and solving psychological problems. She defined bibliotherapy as "the self-examination and insights that are gained from reading..." (p. 21), and identified ways in which reading helps students cope with death. She wrote that books help students cope with death by offering them an opportunity to:

1. Identify with others. This identification process often evokes thoughts about solutions when readers realize that a character has coped with a situation.
2. Realize they are not alone and enhance their feelings of normalcy and belonging.
3. Release tension, fear, anxiety, anger, and grief by vicariously experiencing the difficulties and feelings of characters.
4. Develop insight into their problems.
5. Facilitate the sharing of problems by giving young people the language with which to communicate their pain (pp. 25-29).

Klingman (39) points out the advantages to choosing a short story or poem in the use of bibliotherapy in the classroom teaching of death education: (a) they can be read and discussed as a single unit in a class hour, (b) can be easily be read by the teacher in

front of the class (if necessary), and (c) are sufficiently ambiguous so that children must bring much of their own experience to them, so they can thus serve as projective devices (p. 275). Klingman recommends four main teaching strategies a teacher can use with the reading: (a) extended discussion, where the teacher encourages students after reading the story to describe and discuss the behavior, thoughts, and feelings of the characters, leading the discussion from the general and universal to the more specific and personal to allow each student to find those things relevant to his or her own life-style and life experience: ideas, values, conflicts, ways of coping, coping styles, and solutions; (b) by-the-way comments, should be used by the teacher to contradict or neutralize the undesirable elements of the literature; (c) reflective comments, to bring up thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and nonverbal behavior that are not explicitly expressed by students, in order to help them recognize present thoughts and feelings they tend to ignore; and (d) free writing, where the teacher encourages pupils to use free or subjective writing in relation to the book read. If used correctly by the teacher, free writing provides the student with a "self-initiated catharsis technique that provides a way of displaying both conscious and unconscious material and a communicative channel for revealing some of the fear, rage and sorrow related to death" (p. 276).

Literature provides the most popular means of teaching about death to children of all ages. As a result, there have been

published recently what amounts to free-standing bibliographies which concern themselves with literature for children about death and are intended for use by adults. The accompanying annotated bibliography entitled "Resources for Teachers" includes reviews of seventy books about death for children with suggestions for use according to age level and concept being taught. This resource should provide the teacher with the best means of teaching the sensitive subject of death to children.

Another excellent methodology for use with children in teaching about death is the use of audiovisual aids. According to Corr (33), films and other audiovisual aids can create a "concrete experience which provokes spontaneous feelings about death and which elicits immediate reactions" (p. 439). By observing the concrete words and actions relating to death in a film, children are better able to develop an understanding of death. The accompanying annotated bibliography, "Resources for Teachers", describes forty-eight audio-visual aids for use with children in kindergarten through grades twelve, and will provide teachers with an introduction to the numerous media available for teaching death and dying to children.

Other methodology for teaching children about death are summarized in Tables II, III, and IV. The teaching methodology summarized in this review is only an introduction to the numerous creative approaches teachers might use to help children develop a healthy understanding of the often misunderstood topic of death.

Teachers should refer to the excellent source books listed in the accompanying annotated bibliography for a broader coverage of teaching methodology.

TABLE II

Presentation Techniques for Death Education with Children

A. Lectures
   1. Comparison of death attitudes over time and by different cultures.
   2. The language of death: barriers to communication about death.
   3. Understanding death: definitions, fears, encounters with death, process of dying.
   4. Death themes in literature, music, and art.
   5. Changing mortality patterns and risk taking: accidents, disasters, violence, war, nuclear threat, stress, life-styles.
   6. The process of grief and mourning: how to help friends and relatives who are bereaved.
   7. Comparison of rituals surrounding death: ceremonies and burial practices of various religious and ethnic groups.
   8. Preparing for your own death: wills, funeral planning.
   9. Explaining death to children.
   10. Ethical issues related to death: euthanasia, the right to die movement, rational suicide for terminally ill, abortions, suicide, transplants.
   11. Present various methods and costs of body disposal: burial, cremation, organ and body donations, cryonics.

B. Guest
   1. A lawyer to speak on wills and probate.
   2. An insurance representative to talk about various kinds of life and health insurance.
   3. People concerned with the business aspects of health-care to discuss the costs of health care (nursing home or hospital administrator).
   4. A minister to talk about how they help people handle grief.
   5. A physician or nurse to talk about how they help dying patients.
   6. A physician to speak on the patient's right to know they are dying, and certification of death.
   7. A physician or nurse to talk about life-prolonging measure in a hospital.
   8. A member of a transplant team, physician or nurse to talk about current legal and logistical aspects of organ transplantation.
   9. A person who has had a near-death out of the body experience.
   10. A minister to speak on different religious views of death.

C. Field Trips

1. Visit to cemetery or pet cemetery; ask children to look at the different grave markers to determine how much it tells them about the person or pet buried there.
2. Visit a funeral home after reading Corley's Tell Me About Death, Tell Me About Funerals. Ask funeral directors to explain what their job involves and how they support the grieving family.
3. Visit local newspaper. Interview reporter who writes obituaries for local paper.
4. Visit nursing home having pre-planned constructive activity for student-resident interaction.
5. Visit hospice or hospital and have someone speak to children about how they help the dying person.

TABLE III

Action Techniques for Death Education with Children

1. Children cut out pictures of people of different ages from magazines and prepare a chart or collage. Discuss the different characteristics of the aging process identified by the pictures.
2. Children draw pictures of their idea of what death is. Discuss the meaning of the pictures as a group.
3. Children review old newspapers and find at least 10 articles involving accidental death, ask them to write down the age of death and cause of accident, then combine these "statistics", and ask class to develop a chart.
4. Children scan magazines, newspapers and cut out words they associate with death, and words they associate with life. Construct a "Life" and "Death" collage as a class, then discuss the meanings of the words and allow students to tell why they associate particular words with life or death.
5. Students write the eulogy that they wish to be read at their funeral should they die at 20, 30, 40, etc. Discuss the eulogies and allow students to explain what they mean and why they constructed them in the way they did.
6. Give students a facsimile of a coat of arms on a large piece of paper and ask them to draw pictures in the first five sections and words in the sixth section to answer the following questions:
    a. What do you regard as your greatest personal achievement to date?
    b. What do you regard as your family's greatest achievement?
    c. What is the one thing that other people can do to make you happy?
    d. What is something you are striving to become, or to be?
    e. What would you do if you had only one year to live and were guaranteed success in whatever you attempted?
    f. What three things would you like to be said about you if you died today?
7. Students complete a "Longevity Calculation" and prepare a poster, painting, or collage to demonstrate specific ways they might increase their chances for living longer.

TABLE IV

Interaction Techniques for Death Education for Children

A. Discussions

Discussions should form the basis for all death education courses because what children appear to want most from death education is the opportunity to express their feelings and concerns related to death. The most therapeutic aspect of death education discussions is for the child to learn that it is acceptable to talk about death, and that no feelings or questions related to the subject are unacceptable. Discussion capitalizes on the student's desire to talk and share his/her thoughts, and students learn a great deal about their feelings by discussing them with their peers. Discussion time must be planned after every learning activity, and it is always best to plan for more time that you think you will need because this volatile subject precipitates an unusual amount of discussion.

B. Role-Playing

These exercises provide students the opportunity to examine feelings, attitudes, and thoughts about a situation prior to actually having to deal with the situation, thus they provide a particularly effective teaching tool for death education. Role-playing exercises must be well planned and students must be thoroughly familiar with the "ground rules" before they can be effective. In addition to preparing role players for their roles, the teacher might want to manipulate the lighting and props in the room to make the situation more life like. Some examples of these exercies are:

1. A classmate's mother has died and she is returning to school today. One student will play the bereaved classmate and others will take turns talking with her and comforting her.
2. A classmate has just been diagnosed with a terminal illness. One student will play the dying student and one a visitor to this student in the hospital. This exercies would be best for older students.
3. A classmate's dog was killed in an accident yesterday. Classmates can take turns playing the bereaved student and the comforting student.
4. Group role play "The Mayflower" (30, pp. 28-29).
5. The classroom can become a courtroom with mock or real cases tried before juries on the right to die. Before this exercise have students write to the following organizations for pamphlets, information, and copies of the Living Will:

Concern for Dying 250 West 57th Street New York, NY 10107	The Hemlock Society P.O. Box 66218 Los Angeles, CA 90066-0218

C. Debates

1. Students can debate moral and legal issues concerning death that are of interest to the class (death with dignity or the right to die, transplants, capital punishment, ecology, body disposal).

D. Simulation Games

1. "Cave-in" simulation game (40).
2. Simulation game designed to teach students facilitative statements toward the bereaved (41).

E. Interviews

Students could interview a variety of people about death experiences and report back to the group. Specifically they need to ascertain how the individual felt during the bereavement and how they coped with grief.

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